

with a threat to downgrade U.S. debt, which would cost U.S. taxpayers billions of dollars a year in extra interest payments.

The U.S. is sovereign. Standard & Poor's is not.

When we work to raise the debt ceiling, we should also raise questions about Standard & Poor's. Maybe it's time to downgrade Standard & Poor's to junk status.

HAILING THE HEROISM OF DEAN AND DIANE PETITPREN

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I'm going to tell a story that just happened this past week, which I think is just a vivid display of the human spirit and heroism as well.

There is a fellow named Michael Trapp who had a very lucky week. He was flying his Cessna airplane from his home in New York over to Wisconsin and unfortunately had engine problems. The air traffic control tower lost contact with him, and he crashed his airplane in Lake Huron.

I represent a district in Michigan. If you think of a mitten, this fellow fortunately crashed his airplane right off the tip of the thumb here. The Coast Guard was having a full search and rescue. The Marine Division was out looking for him. A day went by. A night went by. They couldn't find this fellow. Some very good friends of mine, Dean and Diane Petitpren, were out boating in their boat, and Diane Petitpren sees a fellow waving his sock in the middle of Lake Huron, and they saved that man's life.

I just think with everything happening in Washington here this week, it's good for us to take a moment and think about the human spirit and the people that have charitable and caring hearts.

REBUILDING THE AMERICAN DREAM

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. A lot of commentators have been talking about the debt ceiling, the market, the jobs numbers. What we should be talking about is people, families facing tough decisions looking for help from a Congress that doesn't seem interested.

Americans are tired of watching Wall Street speculators, CEOs, and big corporations call all the shots. Working people need a Congress that understands today's tough economic reality and focuses on making their lives better. Unfortunately, because of politics in Washington and extreme ideology, that's not happening.

My Republican colleagues have been very public about their intention to take apart Medicare and Medicaid to

pay for yet another tax cut for the millionaires and billionaires and to preserve subsidies for Big Oil companies. They've decided our current economy is the fault of the American people, and now they're going to empty middle class pockets to pay for it.

The talk in Washington right now is driven by ideology that really has nothing to do with cost savings or preserving the American Dream. What it's really about is who suffers and wins when Congress decides that ideology is more important than job creation and that Social Security and Medicare aren't worth paying for any more.

It's time we reward people for what they contribute, not for what they can get away with taking.

It's time we expand opportunity and protect the middle class.

It's time to focus on the real crisis in America—the jobs crisis.

CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE IS THE BEST FOR THE NATION

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, led by the positive leadership of Speaker JOHN BOEHNER, House Republicans passed the best bipartisan solution to the debt ceiling last week, the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act of 2011.

Liberals in the Senate chose to hide and had a tabling vote to cowardly avoid a recorded vote on the issue. I urge liberals to join conservatives and vote for a solution which creates jobs and stop the President who is stuck on tax increases destroying jobs.

The President does not have a plan. He even admits he's bluffing. Sadly, this was further revealed yesterday when the gross domestic product was reported to be stagnant.

Additionally, the front page headline today of The Washington Post proclaims, "Economic growth at near standstill."

The President should change course and work for bipartisan proposals to create jobs and preserve the Nation's credit rating.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

□ 1210

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are advised to refrain from making derogatory comments about the Senate.

STOP FRAGGING THE AMERICAN ECONOMY

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. There is absolutely no excuse for this reckless, un-

patriotic behavior on the part of the Republicans. The looming default crisis could be resolved in 5 minutes by simply raising the debt ceiling, as was done 7 times under Bush and 18 times under Ronald Reagan. This is the exact opposite of fiscal responsibility. The Republicans, led by their Tea Party radicals, are determined to cripple government and destroy Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security while leaving untouched a hair on the head of millionaires and billionaires or corporations that pay zero in taxes.

I say to the Republicans, stop it. Seniors call sobbing about their Social Security checks. Our soldiers in Afghanistan repeatedly asked Admiral Mullen yesterday, Will we get paid? Will our families get our checks? Shame on the Republicans for making that happen. In battle, when you accidentally shoot your own, it's called "friendly fire." When you deliberately shoot your own, it's called "fragging." Republicans, stop fragging the American economy and the American people.

LET AMERICANS OWN SOME OF AMERICA

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. In this time of money crisis, we talk about the fact that we need revenue. Congress seems to be addicted to taxation as a form of revenue. But there's another way to raise revenue. Did you know, Mr. Speaker, that 27 percent of the land owned in the United States is owned by Uncle Sam? Fifty-two percent of it in the West is owned by Uncle Sam. How much is that? That's the size of all of Western Europe. So maybe we ought to think about Uncle Sam selling some of that land to Americans, not the National Parks, not the wetlands, these sensitive areas, but that land owned by the Bureau of Land Management that is not in use now. And then we sell that land, some of it, and then it will be revenue-producing because the people who buy it will pay taxes. Local taxes go to schools and help those schools. Something to think about. In this time of raising revenue, maybe Uncle Sam could do without 27 percent of all of the land in America. Let Americans own part of America, not just the Federal Government.

And that's just the way it is.

LISTEN TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

(Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, as the debate on avoiding a devastating default has progressed over the last several months, we've heard from many House Republicans that "compromise" is a dirty word. But the voices we should be listening to are